

Takoma Park Committee on the Environment  
October 11, 2005

Meeting Minutes

In attendance:

COE members:  
Catherine Tunis  
Bruce Sidwell  
Robert Goo  
Mar-E Robnett  
Jack Lipschultz  
Albert Nunez  
Tim Male  
Kea Woodruff

Barbara Matthews, City Manager

Meeting began at 7:30 pm. Catherine and Bruce gave overviews of COE retreat issues and explained desire to have partnership between COE and City Council, and possibly a liaison for specific projects. Barbara confirmed that it is also her intention that the relationship between the Committee and the City be a partnership, and that the Committee work hand in hand with staff.

Barbara agreed with the Committee's desire to enhance transparency of City operations on environmental issues. Barbara mentioned that City website is currently being re-vamped. COE will put together a packet of information for the site.

Catherine gave review of major COE goals:

-Stormwater management

- Important to focus on watershed function with stormwater as a resource.
- Possibility of working on a watershed plan – COE would like to review other plans, both local and model.
- Limit impervious surfaces
- Develop City permit requirements

-Wildlife habitat

- COE would like role to be educational. Also discussed possible use of City property(s) for certification process through WWF.

-Pollution control/Waste reduction

- Possible collaboration with emergency preparedness committee.
- Inventory of local businesses that discharge hazardous material.
- Possibility of COE conducting research, developing policy regarding procurement and product use, similar to or expanding on current EnergyStar appliance/lighting guidelines.

Barbara will provide COE with contact information for access to documents regarding existing policies.

-Energy

Revisit and review 6 strategies of Climate Change Action Plan that was developed with ICLEI help. The Plan should still be available in the Library. COE would like to provide booklets/information for citizens regarding energy use.

Barbara suggested the Library as location for energy saving booklets.

Albert encouraged the City to reconsider green building construction for additional new buildings and the incorporation of alternative energy sources, including geothermal using WSSC water.

There was discussion of collaboration between COE and emergency preparedness committee in pursuing grants to make city building(s) a refuge in case of emergency, e.g., providing solar or other on-site power generation for use when power grid is down.

Barbara will email Catherine a list of other committee contacts. Barbara explained that there is no longer a full-time grant writer on staff.

COE would like all new construction contractors/businesses/property owners to receive a copy of Green Building Guidelines.

-Urban forest

COE would like stronger partnership regarding preservation of large trees because they provide orders of magnitude more environmental benefits than seedlings. COE would like to continue in education/outreach role and would like collaboration on Arbor Day event, including species selection and emphasis on natives. COE would like inventory of City property and inquired about the possible availability of space for community gardens.

Barbara mentioned that there are opportunities for the Tree Ordinance to be strengthened. The City will be discussing it; more details are expected soon. COE expressed interest in having a meeting to discuss language early on in the development of revisions and discuss concepts in current Tree Ordinance and fine-tune any amendments before the document is presented to the Council.

COE would like an inventory of trees and roofs in TP. The City purchased software; COE needs satellite data to be able to utilize software. Parks and Planning Dept. and Maryland DNR are possible sources of data.

Albert explained some options for cooling taller buildings, including green roofs and cool roofs. COE would like to invite businesses, hospitals, schools, churches, etc. to EnergyStar presentation, and develop an option of group purchasing.

Barbara encouraged housing committee involvement also.

Barbara gave summary of staff needs/concerns:

- Education component provided by COE invaluable

- Need for newsletter material and content

- Review of Stormwater Phase II regulations (EPA)

COE would like data regarding which trees tolerate drought/reduce carbon load.

Catherine noted a source she used in developing the tree portion of the Climate Change Action Plan.

November meeting will be held on Wednesday the 9<sup>th</sup> so as not to fall on election Tuesday.